

## JOURNAL 1: the reading, writing, and thinking connection

Journals are a very “free” kind of writing assignment and are almost always informal and conversational. Journal questions are designed to make you think about something simply by writing whatever comes into your mind—your ideas, opinions, experiences, inspirations, questions, etc. I never grade your grammar or correctness in journal assignments; instead, what counts (and will earn you the most points) is that you have carefully considered the question, put some good thought and effort into your answer (avoiding the “easy” answers that come to your mind right away), and that you attempt to explain your ideas in a way that is not too general (includes good detail).

For this assignment, I have given you a brief reading assignment and three questions about the reading. On a separate piece of paper, you may handwrite or type your responses to the questions. Write out your answers in complete sentences and paragraph form (not note or list form). You should write at least one good-sized paragraph for each question (8-14 sentences). Each response is worth 15 points (45 points total).

**YOUR COMPLETED ANSWERS TO ALL 3 QUESTIONS ARE DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS TOMORROW (FRIDAY 5/20)**

### QUESTIONS:

- 1) At the bottom of the first page (p. xxxiii), the authors refer to taking classes in many different academic disciplines—and the work you will do in these classes—as “joining the academic conversation.” Rather than viewing students as spectators or observers (like being among fans at a football game), the authors suggest that students are instead *participants* in various fields of study (like being the football players themselves).

**What do you think about the authors’ idea that students are *part of the conversation* instead of simply people who *listen to or overhear* the conversation? Is this view different from how your culture views education and the role of the student? How is it different? What do you personally think about being a *participant* rather than a *spectator*? Is being part of the “academic conversation” a good thing? Why or why not?**

- 2) On p. xxxiv, under “Writing clarifies thought,” the authors refer to a question that writer E.M. Forster asked that has become well-known and rather famous among writers and people who teach writing. Forster asks, “How do I know what I think until I see what I say?”

**What do you think Forster means? Why do you think this question is so important to writers? What does it suggest about the connection between writing and learning?**

- 3) The authors mention that the following activities and practices are all important to writing: using notes to help you remember things, taking notes about your ideas, taking notes about what you read, recording your responses to readings, being able to understand and summarize readings, writing down things from readings and experiences that inspire you or cause you to think about something particular or unusual, recognizing and noting connections between what you read and have experienced, and so on. By mentioning these things, the authors are trying to point out that there is a very strong connection between reading, writing, and thinking, and the idea that these three activities are impossible to separate from each other is widely accepted among writers and educators.

**In your experience, have reading, writing, and thinking been most often separated (taught separately) or have they usually been linked (connected) somehow? What do you think about the idea that reading, writing, and thinking are always connected? What do you think some of the connections are between these activities?**